

And, having made sure of that, they could do nothing but go back.

As a matter of fact, although it was rather disappointing not to find any inner passage, nobody had thought it likely.

And yet -when Captain Gould and John Block and Fritz got back, they had a feeling of being more confined than ever on this shore.

During the next few days the weather, very fine hitherto, showed signs of changing. Light clouds, which soon grew thicker, obscured the blue sky, blown over the plateau above by a northerly breeze which, in the evening of the 22nd of January, strengthened until it blew a gale.

Coming from that quarter, the wind was no menace to Turtle Bay. Sheltered by the cliff, the bay was not exposed to the breakers, as it had been in the violent storm which had caused the destruction of the boat. The sea would remain calm along the shore, not getting the force of the wind nearer than a good mile and a half from the coast. Even if a hurricane burst there would be nothing to fear.

A heavy thunderstorm broke on the night of the 22nd. About one o'clock in the morning everybody was awakened suddenly

by a crash
of thunder that, made a more appalling
noise than
a cannon fired at the mouth of the
cave could
liaire done*